

Outline of a Plan for
Connecticut's New Comprehensive Early Childhood System
Early Childhood Planning Team ~ February 4, 2013

Governor Malloy announced today a bold plan to create a new early childhood agency which will report directly to his office. This new agency, to be named the Office of Early Childhood, will have an Executive Director and will unite services for young children birth to age 5 in Connecticut under one authority. The vision and mission of this office will focus singularly on young children and their families. This is a new day for young children in Connecticut, and an opportunity to make sure that all the children in our state have the best start possible.

We currently have a number of successful programs for young children but until today these have not been coordinated as a system. A coordinated agency will allow the state to better identify gaps in services and make informed policy decisions. It will allow us to insure that early childhood services are of the highest quality and that families have information and access to these services in order to support the developmental and learning needs of their young children to prepare them to succeed in school and life. Information, access, and quality will be the three pillars of the early childhood system we will build in Connecticut.

The following Early Childhood Programs which have been housed in 5 separate state agencies will be brought together in this new Office of Early Childhood:

From the Board of Regents

- Connecticut Charts-a-Course

From the Dept of Developmental Services

- Birth-to-Three

From the Department of Education

- Early Learning and Development
- Early Childhood Special Education

From the Department of Health

- Child Day Care Licensing
- Home Visiting Grant

From the Department of Social Services

- Child Care Development Fund
- Care 4 Kids
- Children's Trust Fund

These programs will be transitioned in a thoughtful and careful manner to insure that there are no lapses in services. Going forward all of these programs will all be housed in the new agency under one roof, but the location is still to be worked out. In order to be cost efficient, support services, such as legal, human resources, and information technology, for the Office of Early Childhood will be provided by the Department of Education.

The Early Childhood Cabinet will serve an advisory role to this new agency and the work of the workgroups will be transitioned to the staff the Office of Early Childhood. The Cabinet will be reconfigured over time to reflect its new role.

We are fortunate to have a Governor who has a commitment to young children and is willing to place Connecticut with the small number of cutting-edge states that have chosen to create a comprehensive governance structure for early childhood services -- a structure that reflects the interrelated nature of children's development.